

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 03759 071127Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----071128Z 054326 /20  
O 071122Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1287

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03759

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: UK, PFOR  
SUBJECT: HMG AND HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: LONDON 3718

1. A SOURCE CLOSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER HAS TOLD US THAT DR. OWEN'S MARCH 3 SPEECH ON HUMAN RIGHTS WAS VERY MUCH HIS OWN IDEA. IT IS A CAUSE TO WHICH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY IS PERSONALLY COMMITTED AND ON WHICH HE FEELS A CLOSE AFFINITY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. THE PRIME MINISTER VETTED OWEN'S SPEECH AND, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, TONED DOWN SOME OF THE "CONFRONTATIONAL ASPECTS."  
2. THE PRIME MINISTER, HE SAID (IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE), APPRECIATED THAT OWEN WANTED TO DEAL WITH A MAJOR ISSUE IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC ADDRESS AS FOREIGN SECRETARY, BUT HE WAS ALSO APPREHENSIVE THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT INTERPRET OWEN'S SPEECH AS THE SIGNAL FOR A POLICY CHANGE, I.E., A DELIBERATE DECISION BY HMG TO TAKE A TOUGHER LINE. IN ANY EVENT, THE PRIME MINISTER HAS LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THIS IS NOT THE BEGINNING OF A "CAMPAIGN" ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THE UK, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, CANNOT AFFORD TO GET OUT IN FRONT ON THIS ISSUE.

3. COMMENT: EVEN BEFORE OWEN'S SPEECH, SOVIET  
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AMBASSADOR LUNKOV HAD REGISTERED THE USSR'S STRONG DISPLEASURE WITH BRITISH STAND ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION. WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN SECRETARY BOTH FAVOR CAREFULLY NUANCED APPROACHES TO HUMAN RIGHTS, IT APPEARS CALLAGHAN MAY BE A BIT MORE SENSITIVE TO SOVIET PRESSURE, READYER TO LET THE US MAKE THE RUNNING.

SPIERS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, SPEECHES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009